

Office of the Child Advocate to Review Involvement with Bella Bond's Family

As Governor Baker has announced, the Office of the Child Advocate will examine the involvement of child welfare, all executive agencies, police and any other service providers with Bella Bond's family to see if any opportunities were missed to raise issues about her safety and well being and what lessons can be learned to prevent another tragedy like this.

"The horrific death and tragic life of two-year-old Bella reminds us all of our responsibility to be watchful and to say something to authorities if a helpless child is mistreated," said Acting Child Advocate Linda Carlisle. "Children under the age of five may not be able to communicate their experiences, and may not be visible in the community because they aren't in day care or in school. They are especially vulnerable and require the vigilance of the entire community."

Since the Department of Children and Families (DCF) had not been involved with Bella or her Mother Rachelle Bond since 2013, and no subsequent reports of abuse or neglect had been received by DCF, the Child Advocate will look closely at DCF's closing of the case in 2013, and also at any information that can be obtained from professionals who may have seen Bella during her short, tragic life.

It is our intention for this review to be completed within 30 days, if not sooner. Governor Baker and Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders have directed agencies to provide whatever information is needed for our office to do a timely review.

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